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February 20, 2018

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Promoting Telehealth in Rural America – WC Docket No. 17-310

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The Oregon Broadband Advisory Council was created by the Oregon Legislative Assembly with the support of the Governor to encourage coordination and collaboration between organizations and economic sectors to leverage the development and utilization of broadband for education, workforce development and telehealth, and to promote broadband utilization by citizens and communities. The Council members represent Oregon's cities, counties, telecommunications service providers, Tribes, educators, economic development organizations, public safety agencies, healthcare providers, Office of the State CIO, the Public Utility Commission, the State House of Representatives and the State Senate.

Oregon has greatly benefited from telehealth initiatives and funding through the Rural Health Care Pilot Program and the Healthcare Connect Fund. Health care is an important "driver" application for expanding broadband infrastructure to rural areas of our nation and closing the rural-urban digital divide. High quality broadband and health care services are both essential for rural economic growth and community development.

The Oregon Broadband Advisory Council strongly supports increasing funding above the \$400 million level, which has remained unchanged since 1997, for the Rural Health Care Program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph Franell
Chair
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